(c) During the Financial Year 1998-99, a total capacity of 38MW of surplus power from bagasse based co-generation projects was added.

The average cost of generation of power from bagasse based co-generation projects varies from Rs.1.50 to Rs.2.75/kwh.

Running Street Lights by Solar Energy

710. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some crossings/street lights in the capital are being run by solar energy and are proving to be cost effective; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken and proposed to be taken to assist Panchayats and its shopping places to install public lights run by solar energy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) and (b) A Solar Photovoltaic (SPV) operated traffic signal lighting system was installed at the Bhikaji Cama Place crossing in New Delhi in August 1998 as a demonstration project. A few such systems have also been installed in Bangalore and Hyderabad.

The cost effectiveness of solar powered street lights or traffic signals in places where conventional grid-power is available is yet to be established. However, solar street lights are a cost effective option for remote and rural areas, which do not have access to conventional grid power. Under the Ministry's programme, installation of solar street lighting systems is being supported through subsidy for all categories of non-commercial institutions/ organizations, State renewable energy development agencies, panchayats, zilla parishads and DRDAs. During the Ninth Plan period so far, a total of 6,804 solar street lighting systems have been installed in the country. Some commercial organizations have also installed solar lights in their factories, offices and townships.

Setting up Solar Energy Plants in North Eastern Region

711. SHRI ONWARD L. NONGTDU: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to set up solar energy plants in the various districts of North Eastern Region;